## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Currently Amended)** A chain tensioner ~~comprising~~ comprising:

a housing formed with a cylinder chamber, a plunger slidably mounted in said cylinder chamber, said cylinder chamber defining a pressure chamber behind said plunger;

a spring mounted in said cylinder chamber and biasing said plunger outwardly of said cylinder ~~chamber, and~~ chamber;

a retraction restrictor ~~means~~ provided between said housing and said plunger for preventing said plunger from retracting toward a closed end of said cylinder chamber ~~over~~ beyond a predetermined ~~distance,~~ distance;

~~said housing being formed with~~ an oil supply passage formed in said housing and communicating with ~~a~~ said pressure chamber ~~defined in said cylinder chamber behind said plunger, whereby~~, said oil supply passage being configured to supply a hydraulic oil such that a pushing force applied to said plunger is dampened by the hydraulic oil; ~~oil supplied through said oil supply passage into said pressure chamber,~~

~~characterized in that~~ a ring fitting groove ~~is~~ formed in an outer periphery of said plunger ~~at its portion~~ near a rear end of said plunger ~~thereof which is~~ located inside said cylinder chamber, ~~that~~

a radially elastically deformable elastic ring ~~is~~ received in said ring fitting groove in a radially compressed state ~~, and that~~ and;

an engaging groove ~~is~~ formed in an inner periphery of said cylinder chamber near an open end of said cylinder chamber ~~thereof~~, said elastic ring being engageable in said engaging groove and being configured to radially expand in said engaging groove ~~to~~ such ~~an extent~~ that an inner

diameter ~~thereof~~ of said elastic ring is smaller than an outer diameter of said plunger and said elastic ring is disposed in both said engaging groove and said ring fitting groove to prevent axial movement of said plunger in a direction away from said closed end of said cylinder chamber.

2. **(Currently Amended)** The chain tensioner of ~~claim 1~~ claim 1, wherein said engaging groove has a first axial end surface and a tapered second axial end surface, said tapered second axial end surface being axially opposed to said first axial end surface and being disposed closer to said closed end of said cylinder chamber than said first axial end surface ~~tapered surface on its side near said closed end of said cylinder chamber~~.

3. **(Currently Amended)** A chain tensioner ~~comprising~~ comprising:

a housing formed with a cylinder chamber, a plunger slidably mounted in said cylinder chamber, said cylinder chamber defining a pressure chamber behind said plunger;

a spring mounted in said cylinder chamber and biasing said plunger outwardly ~~of~~ away from said cylinder chamber; ~~chamber, and~~

a retraction restrictor ~~means~~ provided between said housing and said plunger for preventing said plunger from retracting toward a closed end of said cylinder chamber ~~over~~ beyond a predetermined distance; ~~distance,~~

~~said housing being formed with~~ an oil supply passage formed in said housing and communicating with ~~a~~ said pressure chamber ~~defined in said cylinder chamber behind said plunger, whereby~~, said oil supply passage configured to supply a hydraulic oil such that a pushing force applied to said plunger is dampened by the hydraulic oil; ~~oil supplied through said oil~~

~~supply passage into said pressure chamber,~~

~~characterized in that~~ a ring fitting groove ~~is~~ formed in an inner periphery of said cylinder chamber near an open end of said cylinder chamber; ~~thereof, that~~

a radially elastically deformable elastic ring ~~is~~ received in said ring fitting groove in a radially expanded state; and ~~state, and that~~

an engaging groove is formed in an outer periphery of said plunger near a rear end of said plunger; ~~thereof,~~

said elastic ring being engageable in said engaging groove and being configured to be radially compressed in said engaging groove ~~to~~ such ~~an extent~~ that an outer diameter ~~thereof~~ of said elastic ring is larger than an inner diameter of said cylinder chamber and said elastic ring is disposed in both said engaging groove and said ring fitting groove to prevent axial movement of said plunger in a direction away from said closed end of said cylinder chamber.

4. **(Currently Amended)** The chain tensioner of ~~claim 3~~ claim 3, wherein said engaging groove has a first axial end surface and a tapered second axial end surface, said tapered second axial end surface being axially opposed to said first axial end surface and being disposed closer to a front end of said plunger than said first axial end surface ~~tapered surface on its side near a front end of said plunger~~.

5. **(Currently Amended)** The chain tensioner of ~~claim 1~~ claim 1, wherein said elastic ring is a C-shaped member having two separate ends and formed of a steel wire having a circular cross-section.

6. **(Currently Amended)** The chain tensioner of ~~claim 1~~ claim 1, wherein said elastic ring is made of a resin ~~having excellent sliding properties~~ so as to facilitate sliding between the plunger and the cylinder chamber.

7. **(Currently Amended)** The chain tensioner of ~~claim 2~~ claim 2, wherein said elastic ring is a C-shaped member having two separate ends and formed of a steel wire having a circular cross-section.

8. **(Currently Amended)** The chain tensioner of ~~claim 3~~ claim 3, wherein said elastic ring is a C-shaped member having two separate ends and formed of a steel wire having a circular cross-section.

9. **(Currently Amended)** The chain tensioner of ~~claim 4~~ claim 4, wherein said elastic ring is a C-shaped member having two separate ends and formed of a steel wire having a circular cross-section.

10. **(Currently Amended)** The chain tensioner of ~~claim 2~~ claim 2, wherein said elastic ring is made of a resin ~~having excellent sliding properties~~ so as to facilitate sliding between the plunger and the cylinder chamber.

11. **(Currently Amended)** The chain tensioner of ~~claim 3~~ claim 3, wherein said elastic ring is made of a resin ~~having excellent sliding properties~~ so as to facilitate sliding between the plunger and the cylinder chamber.

12. **(Currently Amended)** The chain tensioner of ~~claim 4~~ claim 4, wherein said elastic ring is made of a resin ~~having excellent sliding properties~~ so as to facilitate sliding between the plunger and the cylinder chamber.